

## 5 COMPARE ALTERNATIVE PLANS

In step five, plans (including the no action plan) are compared against each other with an emphasis on the outputs and effects that will have the most influence in the decision making process. Both beneficial and adverse effects of each plan must be compared.

The result of step five is a ranking of the alternative plans.

## 6 SELECT A PLAN

During step six, a single alternative plan is selected for recommendation from among all those that have been considered. The recommended plan must be shown to be preferable to taking no action (if no action is not recommended) or implementing any of the other alternatives considered during the planning process.

The final result of step six, and the planning process, is the selection of the recommended plan or the decision to take no action.

The final recommended plan should be the plan that maximizes the net benefits. However, the plan must also be locally acceptable.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Further information can be received from:

- ~ The latest newsletter and the “General Information Brochure” are available by contacting Gene Lilly.
- ~ The Tulsa District web page on Tar Creek located by navigating the Tulsa District Home Page (<http://www.swt.usace.army.mil>). Once at the Home Page, click on “Library” and scroll down to “Miami, Oklahoma and Vicinity (Tar Creek Watershed) Feasibility Study.”
- ~ Questions and comments can be directed via telephone, mail, or e-mail to:

Mr. Gene Lilly  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers,  
Tulsa District  
Attn: CESWT-PE-P  
1645 S. 101<sup>st</sup> East Avenue  
Tulsa, OK 74128-4609  
Phone: (918) 669-7196  
Email: [Douglas.E.Lilly@usace.army.mil](mailto:Douglas.E.Lilly@usace.army.mil)

# The Corps of Engineers Planning Process\*

MIAMI, OKLAHOMA AND VICINITY  
TAR CREEK WATERSHED



\* Taken from ER 1105-2-100, Planning Guidance Notebook, Chapter 2. 22 April 2000.

# THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS PLANNING PROCESS

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers follows a six step planning process. This process will be used during the Miami and Vicinity Feasibility Study. The six steps are:

1. Identify problems and opportunities
2. Inventory and forecast conditions
3. Formulate alternative plans
4. Evaluate alternative plans
5. Compare alternative plans
6. Select a plan

The steps are detailed in the following sections. It is important to note that as information is acquired and developed, it may be necessary to repeat past steps.

All steps of the planning process take place in a public context. Public comments and questions are welcomed throughout the planning process.

## **1 IDENTIFY PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

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The first step in the planning process is to identify problems and opportunities to correct those problems.

The National Environmental Policy Act (40 CFR 1500-1508) requires ALL Federal agencies involved in water resources planning

to conduct a “scoping” process. This process determines the extent of the issues to be addressed and identifies significant issues related to a proposed action.

Once the problems and opportunities are identified, the planning study objectives and constraints are defined. The study objectives and constraints are used to guide the study. They are statements that describe the desired results of the planning process. The planning constraints are restrictions that limit the planning process.

## **2 INVENTORY AND FORECAST CONDITIONS**

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The second step of the planning process is to develop, inventory and forecast critical resources relevant to the problems and opportunities under consideration in the study area. The information gathered is used to develop future without-project conditions that are used as a basis from which alternative plans are formulated and impacts are compared.

## **3 FORMULATE ALTERNATIVE PLANS**

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Step three consists of formulating alternative plans that identify specific ways to achieve planning objectives within the planning constraints. The plans are formulated in a manner so as to solve the problems and realize the opportunities that were identified in step one. Plans consists of structural and nonstructural measures.

Plans must comply with existing statutes, administrative regulations, and common law or include proposals for changes.

Alternative plans shall not be limited to those the Corps of Engineers could implement directly under current authorities. Alternatives that could be implemented under the authorities of other Federal agencies, State and local entities and non-governmental interest will also be considered.

Each alternative plan should be formulated in consideration of four criteria: completeness, efficiency, effectiveness, and acceptability.

## **4 EVALUATE ALTERNATIVE PLANS**

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The fourth step in the planning process is the evaluation of each alternative plan. The evaluation begins with predicting the most likely with-project condition expected under each plan. Next, the with-project condition is compared to the without-project condition, and the effects are characterized by magnitude, location, timing and duration. Then the plans that will be further considered in the planning process are identified based on the evaluation criteria.

The criteria for evaluating plans include all significant resources, outputs and plan effects, as well as contributions to the study planning objectives, compliance with environmental protection requirements, and the four criteria listed in step three (completeness, efficiency, effectiveness, and acceptability).